

Message Text

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63

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4229

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMCONGEN ISTANBUL

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

UNCLAS ATHENS 4597

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, GR

SUBJ: PRESS RESERVATIONS ON SERAPHIM'S PERFORMANCE

REF ATHENS 4434

1. SUMMARY: ATHENS PRESS IN INITIAL COMMENT ON SERAPHIM'S ATTACK ON PRIVATE RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND DISMISSAL OF IERONYMIST BISHOPS (REFTEL) HAS DOUBTED WISOM THESE MOVES. END WSUMMARY.

2. AKROPOLIS JULY 13 IN FRONT PAGE LEAD WROTE: "IN HIS MESSAGE TO GREEK PEOPLE, ARCHBISHOP SERAPHIM LEVIED CHARGES AGAINST CERTAIN CLERGYMEN AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS. HME THUS RAISED AN EXPLOSIVE ISSUE. CONSEQUENTLY, THE JEEK PEOPLE WHO RESPECT THE CHURCH AND ARE CONCERNED OVER DEVELOPMENTS IN ITS RANKS, WANT TO HAVE MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE TACTICS OF UNDERMINING, CONSPIRACIES AND DIVISION OT WHICH THE ARCHBISHOP REFERRED. ARCHBISHOP SERAPHIM MUST THROW MORE LIGHT ON THE DIRTY CASES HE ALLUDED TO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE."

3. ELEFTHEROS COSMOS IN JULY 14 FRONG PAGE EDITORIAL SIGNED BY EDITOR CONSTANTOPOULOS SAID: "... WAS THIS THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PROPER TIME TO SEE THE CHURCH IN A STATE OF DIVISION AND

HIGH TENSION? MORE THAN ANY OTHER TIME IN THE PAST THIS NATION MUST BE UNITED... THE GREEK PEOPLE'S FEELINGS GREATLY SUFFER FROM THE CLERGYMEN'S PERFORMANCE. THE BISHOPS SHOULD HAVE DONE THEIR UTMOST TO PREVENT CIVIL STRIFE IN THE CHURCH RANKS. ONLY GOD KNOWS WHAT MAY NOW HAPPEN."

4. ESTIA'S LEAD EDITORIAL OF JULY 13, TITLED "ENOUGH," REGISTERED RESPECT FOR SERAPHIM BUT SAID THERE HAD BEEN TURMOIL ENOUGH IN CHURCH IN RECENT YEARS AND ASKED THAT PRESENT ATTACKS AND COUNTER-ATTACKS CEASE.

5. ALL PAPERS JULY 15 PRINTED DENIAL BY TWO PROFESSORS, ACTING AS SPOKESMEN FOR ZOI, THAT ORGANIZATION HAD ANY RELATION WHATEVER TO THESIS SET FORTH BY SERAPHIM THAT PRIVATE GROUPS WERE PLOTTING TAKEOVER OF THE CHURCH AND SECULAR ORDER.
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